FOUO 463

CLASSIFICATION SECRET/SECURITY INFORMATION

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY USSR/Germany (Soviet Zone)

SUBJECT Miscellaneous Information on Soviet Artillery

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25X1A

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1. Q. Who commands a regimental artillery group? What is the relationship between the artillery deputy of the regimental commander and the commander of the attached or supporting artillery units?

   A. In an infantry regiment, the artillery deputy of the regimental commander commands the regimental artillery group and commanders of any attached or supporting artillery units are subordinate to him.

2. Q. Who dispatches and controls artillery reconnaissance patrols?

   A. The division artillery deputy dispatches radio, telephone, reconnaissance and topography men, who are available from the division headquarters company, to the subordinate units as reconnaissance patrols.

3. Q. What local security forces are available to the battalion commander? To the battery commander?

   A. Battalion and battery commanders are in front of their units as forward observers. They have no special security forces, and have only a minimum number of radio, telephone and reconnaissance men, varying from two to four for the battery commander, from five to eight for the battalion commander. The battalion

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or battery commander must protect himself by shifting fire against any threat. Moreover he always has an alternate observation post to which he can move if necessary.

4. Q. Who organizes the antitank defense of the battalion and the battery? How is it organized?

A. Battalion and battery commanders organize AT defense by directing fire at tanks which appear in the sectors assigned to the unit. AT ditches, AT mines, and other antitank obstacles are located in front of the main line of resistance. These are erected by the separate engineer battalion of the rifle division, under supervision of the division engineer officer, by order of the division commander.

5. Q. At what stage in the course of the attack are artillery and mortar units released to local control?

A. Artillery and mortar units charged with laying down a barrage and supporting infantry are placed under the command of the infantry unit commander, who decides when to release these support units to local control. Usually this occurs only after the successful termination of the attack.

6. Q. What are the criteria for determining the serviceability of individual pieces?

A. Theoretically, all guns (howitzers, mortars, AA, AT and field guns) are classified in four categories as follows: (1) first class; (2) minor defects; (3) defective; and (4) seriously defective. I cannot say which defects would place a gun in any one category. In practice a gun commander will fire his piece in combat as long as it will stand up. During the last war all howitzers, AT, AA, and field guns, and mortars were checked for serviceability and were given minor repairs by the "Orudiynyy Master" (gun mechanic) attached to each unit. This man also determined when it was necessary to send a gun to the battalion artillery repair shop. At present there is no such T/O position in artillery units; instead, the regimental or sep arty bn repair shops determine the serviceability and category of guns.

7. Q. Is timed fire used extensively in Soviet artillery? Do VT fuzes exist? Are they in service as regular material?

A. Soviet artillery uses volley fire, but no timed fire on targets. Soviet artillery uses KTM-1 fuzes for fragmentation anti-personnel rounds, /see page 26, DA pamphlet 30-2/ KTM-3 fuzes for fragmentation anti-personnel or delayed-action rounds against pillboxes, KTM-6 or MD-5 base fuzes for AP rounds against tanks, and RG-6 head fuzes on fragmentation rounds. All of these fuzes can be timed, but none are VT fuzes. Rounds for 37-mm AA use the MG-8 (Membrannyy-golovnoy - head membrane)fuze, which is self-destroying if it fails to hit the target and is called the "Samo likvidator" - Self liquidator. Soviet fuzes are efficient and it is rare that a shell fails to explode. I cannot say whether the Soviets have a VT fuze or not. I never heard of or saw VT fuzes.

8. Q. How extensively is ricochet fire employed by Soviet artillery?

   A. Ricochet fire is used very little by Soviet artillery. It is used only in cases where no direct fire is possible.

9. Q. Are SU-76s which are assigned to infantry regiments considered artillery or tank and mecz troop units? Do they fire according to armored or artillery regulations?

   A. SU-76s in infantry regiments are considered artillery and fire under artillery control according to artillery regulations. All SU units are designated as "battery, battalion, etc" as is done with artillery, and not "company, battalion, etc" as in the infantry.

10. Q. Define subsequent concentration, standing barrage, infantry accompanying barrage, anti-tank (rolling) barrage.

   A. I can define only the following types of fire:

   (a) Nepodvizhnyy Zagraditel'nyy Ogon' - standing barrage; interdiction fire on road junctions and fire on fixed targets.

   (b) Ogon' Na Soprovozhdeniyu Pekhoty - infantry accompanying barrage; fire to cover infantry.

   (c) Protivotankovyy Zagraditel'nyy Ogon' - anti-tank barrage; fire on stationary or moving tanks.

   (d) Postanovka Ognevogo Vala - rolling barrage; moving fire or transfer of fire.

   (e) Sosredotochennyy Ogon' - concentrated fire; used on areas known to contain hostile troop concentrations; usually of short duration.

   (f) Beglyy Ogon' - rapid fire; each gun fires as fast as possible.

   (g) Stryel'ba Po Ploschadyam - zone fire used against an area containing enemy targets.

   (h) Udarnaya Stryelba - percussion fire; used against obstacles such as pillboxes and enemy firing positions.

   (i) Distantsionnaya Stryel'ba - distance fire; fuze is set to explode at a certain time and distance.

11. Q. Are point concentrations employed (in contrast to area concentrations)? How is destruction fire with indirect artillery fire conducted?

   A. Soviet artillery uses both pinpoint concentration fire and area concentration fire. During indirect firing, the observers first register the gun by observing the fire effects and after the target has been zeroed, destruction fire will be conducted in volleys.

12. Q. If a difference of opinion concerning the use of artillery arises between the regimental commander and his artillery deputy or the group commander, who carries the day? Between a combined arms commander and his chief artillery deputy?

A. A good regimental, divisional, corps, or army commander will always consult his artillery deputy on artillery matters and conduct his actions according to the advice given by the artillery deputy. The combined arms commander is the supreme authority, but except in rare instances, the artillery is used as proposed by the artillery deputy.

I remember the case of General Sokolovskiy, who sent a tank corps into action without infantry support, against the advice of his deputy for armored and mechanized troops, while he commanded the Vitebsk-Orsk front during 1944. The tank corps was annihilated, and Sokolovskiy, who had not listened to the advice of his deputy, was removed from his command and was sent to the Far East in disgrace. However Sokolovskiy later regained favor, became CG of GOFG, and presently is the Deputy Minister of Armed Forces in Moscow.

13. Q. What is the function of the towed artillery included in tank and mechanized formations?

A. Towed artillery in tank and mechanized formations is used as regular artillery to lay down a barrage and to support the tank attack by mobile displacement.

14. Q. How long does each type of battery require to go into position and commence firing? Who supervises this procedure? What officer actually directs the firing of the pieces?

A. I have no knowledge about the length of time required for field artillery batteries to be positioned and commence firing.

The 37-mm AA gun on the move is always ready and can be fired within one minute after an order is given.

The battery commander, platoon leader, or gun crew chief (NCO) supervises and directs the actual firing of the 37-mm AA gun.

15. Q. Are most concentrations pre-planned? How does procedure in preparing a concentration upon a surprise target of opportunity differ from that used in deliberate pre-planned fire?

A. All fire concentrations are pre-planned, except those on a surprise target of opportunity. Artillery gun crews spend months of training to learn how to switch fire to a surprise target of opportunity. About two hours per week are devoted exclusively to this type of training.

When a surprise target of opportunity presents itself the observer radios or telephones the necessary information and within one minute firing on the target is commenced. If the first two or three rounds do not pinpoint the target, the observer makes corrections until the target is destroyed. The difference in pre-planned fire and fire on a surprise target is that the target is registered in pre-planned fire and is not registered in fire on surprise targets.

16. Q. How does the forward observer adjust fire upon a target?

A. The forward observer directs fire upon the target by transmitting the azimuth, elevation, and range adjustments to the gun commander by telephone or radio. He observes the results of firing through the battery commander's scope and tells the gun commander what corrections in fire are necessary depending upong the error in fire shown by the graduations on the reticle of the scope. /See [redacted] 25X1A

17. Q. How is artillery reorganized and controlled for a pursuit mission? What artillery formations and types of guns take part in pursuit?

A. For pursuit the artillery is subordinated to the deputy for artillery on the staff of the combined arms commander, who will assign units as the situation demands. Usually only 57-mm, 76-mm, 100-mm and 122-mm (light and medium) artillery units will displace for pursuit. Heavy artillery does not displace immediately but transfers its fire to designated targets until required to move up.

18. Q. How large is a typical battery area? Do pieces remain in their firing positions between firing missions?

A. I can only give information about the positioning of AAA batteries which will cover an area about 100 m square in firing position. While firing defensive missions the AAA guns will remain in position between firing missions, but during offensive action they displace as necessary. /See [redacted] (A)/

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19. Q. What is the function of the new 85-mm gun?

A. The new 85-mm AA gun can also be used as an AT gun. There are no 85-mm field pieces in the Soviet Zone at present /[redacted] 25X1 T-34 tanks have an 85-mm gun which is used as a normal tank gun. I have no further information on the new 85-mm gun.

20. Q. When an antitank defensive (rolling) barrage is used in conjunction with a standing barrage placed just beyond the MLR, what types of guns take part in each? Is there any overlap? Do guns firing in the antitank barrage shift to standing barrage when tanks pass out of pre-planned barrage zone?

A. Antitank defensive rolling barrages are used only if tanks are visible, while a standing barrage is used more as an interdiction fire. To the best of my knowledge such a barrage is not used in conjunction with the standing barrage, and there is no overlap. Guns firing an antitank barrage cease firing when the tanks pass out of the pre-planned barrage zone, so that they will not waste ammunition. All guns except mortars and rocket launchers are AT guns and will fire in AT barrages.

21. Q. What changes have been introduced in artillery training procedures since the end of World War II?

25X1 A. [redacted] new training procedures were instituted for AAA units which superseded training according to the manuals of 1944. Formerly the manuals taught that, when firing on aircraft, the sights were adjusted for the speed, flight direction, angle of dive, and pitch of the aircraft. At present only the speed of the attacking aircraft is fed to the sights. Range correction is no longer manual and firing is done by the collimator only, without requiring the gunner to feed any other computations to the sights. Fire on tanks is also done by the collimator at present, and the gunner must only compute the speed of the tank and adjust the amount of lead or trail necessary. Previously both the course and speed were calculated when firing on tanks.

The new training procedures stress the fact that only direct fire is to be used. I am unable to give information about training procedures or changes in training procedures in other artillery branches.

22. Q. What are the designated transfer limits for the various Soviet artillery pieces?

A. I do not know what the transfer limits are for any Soviet artillery pieces.

23. Q. What types of prime movers are used with the various artillery pieces? Are they cross-country or road-bound vehicles?

A. 37-mm AA guns, 57-mm AT guns, 76-mm guns, and 85-mm AA guns are towed by three-ton Studebaker prime movers in the Soviet Zone of Germany, and by GAZ or ZIS prime movers in the USSR. All of these are cross-country vehicles capable of climbing grades up to 45 degrees.

I saw no fully-tracked or half-tracked prime movers in the Soviet Zone of Germany. During WW II I saw 203-mm guns which were towed by half-tracks. I know of no other prime movers.

24. Q. What is considered the unit of fire of each type of piece? How many rounds of ammunition are carried with each piece normally in combat? How many rounds in the battalion and regimental train?

A. The unit of fire for the 37-mm AA gun is 200 rounds. I cannot give the unit of fire for any other artillery piece.

Two units of fire are carried with each 37-mm AA gun in combat, and three units of fire are carried in the battalion or regimental train.

25. Q. Are the following concepts recognized in the Soviet artillery: Direct Support; General Support; Reinforcing; General Support Reinforcing? If not, how are the forms of fire support designated?

A. The following firing concepts are recognized in Soviet artillery:

(a) Pryamaya Podderzhka - direct support

(b) Obshchaya Podderzhka - general support

(c) Usilivaniye - reinforcing

I never heard of general support reinforcing but there might be such a firing concept.

26. Q. What are "dagger batteries" and how are they used?

A. I have never heard of dagger batteries, but do know the term "Kinzhal'nyy Ogon'" (dagger fire), which refers to overlapping crossfire. Dagger fire was used very effectively by light artillery (57-mm and 76-mm guns) against the Mannerheim line in Finland.

27. Q. Are AT units ever used as regular artillery? If so, how and when?

A. AT units are used as regular artillery and participate in laying down a barrage, especially if insufficient field guns are on hand. The primary mission of AT units is to destroy enemy tanks, but the combined arms commander can use AT guns to fire on enemy pillboxes, fortifications and personnel.

28. Q. When and in what manner do newly-arrived artillery units move into position before an attack? Are positions previously reconnoitered by the CO of the units involved? Are positions prepared for the guns before they arrive? If so, by whom?

A. Newly-arrived artillery units usually move so as to reach their firing position area the night before the attack. All artillery moves are secret, usually done at night travelling cross-country, while observing blackout conditions. Usually the divisional commander and his artillery deputy select the firing positions and reconnoiter them with the regimental commanders. In his turn the regimental commander defines the firing positions for the battalion commanders, who define the positions for the battery commanders. Providing there is sufficient time, the gun positions are prepared, entrenchments are dug, and camouflage is arranged by the gun crews prior to the arrival of the guns. If there is no time for previous preparation, the gun crews will dig in and camouflage their positions immediately after arrival in the area.

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